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Environment Analysis Brief

GCR/EAB 75-3

June 1975

This is the third of a series of periodic reports on the condition of the Soviet grain crop based on all-source analysis [redacted] meteorological data, and collateral information. It was prepared by the Environment Analysis Staff of the Office of Geographic and Cartographic Research. The report was produced without the aid of computer modeling and does not represent finished intelligence.

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Status of 1974-75 Soviet Grain Crops

Soil moisture reserves continue to be the critical factor in the development of the 1974-75 Soviet winter and spring grain crop. Favorable crop conditions in the western Ukraine indicate excellent harvest prospects. By mid-May, winter wheat had flowered and the maximum grains per head had been established. In the eastern oblasts of the Ukraine and the central Volga Region, however, winter grains were experiencing a critical lack of soil moisture. Unless precipitation is adequate by the second or third week of June, the yields from these crops will be significantly reduced.

The spring wheat in the eastern oblasts of the New Lands (east of 70°E) started with unusually high reserves of soil moisture and appears to have excellent prospects. On the other hand, the western portion of the spring wheat region (generally 50°-70°E) opened the planting season with soil moisture reserves at the critical level. The development of the spring wheat crop in this area is now entirely dependent upon the seasonal rainfall.

The area identified on the map as having critically low soil moisture normally produces about 3 million tons of winter wheat and 18 million tons of spring wheat; the western area of low soil moisture produces about 7 million tons of winter wheat.

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Approved For Release 2002/05/07 : CIA-RDP79-01056A000100080003-8

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Status of Soil Moisture in Major Soviet Grain Areas As of 20 May 1975

